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## Outgoing JCS chairman says farewell

Upon the completion of my tenure as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff I want to convey deepest thanks to each soldier, sailor, airman, marine, coastguardsman and civilian who serve this great nation and support the mission throughout the globe.

We have made quantum leaps in achieving new levels of effectiveness in joint warfighting. U.S. forces are admired in every corner of the world -- for professionalism, military skills, dedication to duty, can-do spirit and compassion. The citizens of the United States can be justifiably proud of the military's outstanding service.

Gen. Hugh Shelton will soon become the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I am con-

fident of his leadership and know that he will receive the same loyalty and support in dealing with the challenges and tasks ahead.

The professionalism of the men and women who serve is extraordinary. Thanks for a job well done -- it makes me extremely proud. The past 39 years have been very exciting and rewarding and I would certainly do it all over again, if it were possible. However, the time has come to say farewell. Mrs. Shalikashvili joins me in saying goodbye and wishing you and your families all the best for the future.

With deepest thanks and best wishes,

**Gen. John Shalikashvili**  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff

## Hispanic Heritage Month

# Quinceanera signifies girl's passage from childhood to womanhood

By TSgt. Debbie Gallegos  
Chairman, Hispanic Heritage Committee

A Quinceanera is a traditional Mexican ceremony that officially signifies a young girl's passage from childhood into womanhood. This religious ceremony is a coming out of sorts, similar to the "sweet sixteen" celebration, but observed when a girl turns 15.

This tradition originated with the Aztecs in Mexico and is similar to rituals observed by American Indians. The Franciscan missionaries began to focus the ceremony on Christ and a bilingual Mass is held to honor this coming out. During the Quinceanera a girl renews her baptismal promise to serve God.

A procession of 15 couples -- referred to as padrinos -- march into the church to begin the ceremony. The padrinos are very important in a Quinceanera because they are given the honor of welcoming the girl into adulthood.

The festivities usually include a limousine, five-layer cake, diamond ring, music band, renting of a hall for the reception and dance, mariachi choir, Bible, rosary, bracelet, necklace, white laced gown, tuxedos and other gifts.

The dance is begun with the traditional song, "La Marcha" or "The March," and the girl walks down the aisle with her father. The mariachi band then sings the customary Mexican birthday song, "Las Mananitas." The entire festivity lasts until the early morning hours of the next day.

## Surety inspection countdown 24 days

**Did you know that personnel on the Personnel Reliability Program:**

- ☐ are allowed limited self-medication?
- ☐ must be briefed on their PRP responsibilities by their unit PRP monitor prior to all TDYs?
- ☐ inform all support agencies of their active PRP status before getting treatment or consultation?

See your unit PRP monitor for details.

## 48th Fighter Wing history fact

The 48th Fighter Group received the Presidential Unit Citation for the heroism and professionalism its pilots displayed when they supported ground troops deployed against Germany Dec. 6, 1945. The group committed itself so well that the ground forces were able to advance rapidly through this sector, despite extremely bad weather and heavy ground fire.

